

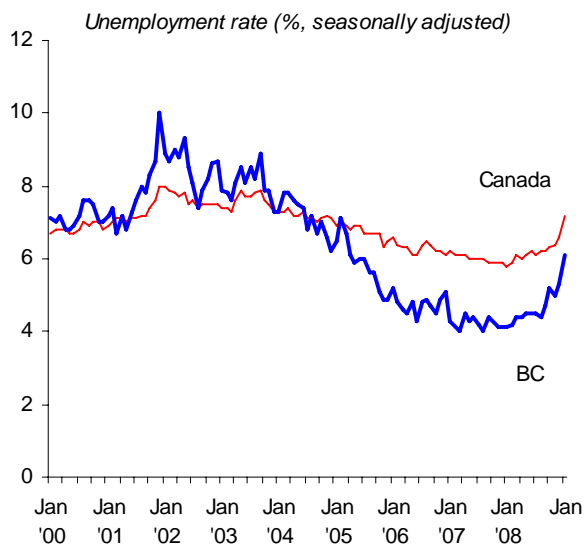
Labour Force Statistics ♦ January 2009

(All labour force statistics are seasonally adjusted, unless otherwise indicated)

Jobless rate jumps to 6.1%

The province's unemployment rate leaped 0.8 percentage points higher to 6.1% in January, the highest month-over-month increase in the jobless rate since late 2001. Employment dropped 1.5%, representing a loss of 35,100 jobs as British Columbia continued to feel the pinch of the global economic downturn. The employment decline in BC was deeper than in any other province and nearly twice the national average (-0.8%). Fewer British Columbians were seeking work as BC's labour force shrank 0.7%. Without this sharp contraction, the province's unemployment rate would have been higher.

Joblessness mounts in BC and across Canada



BC Stats

Employment in goods sector plummets

The goods sector took a drubbing in January as employment tumbled 6.9%, the fourth straight

month of little to no growth, as nearly every industry in the sector registered job losses. Manufacturers shed nearly one-tenth (-9.6%) of their workforce representing 18,100 jobs in that industry while job losses continued to accumulate in the construction industry (-4.8%), which saw its fourth consecutive monthly decline in January. Since September, construction has seen 31,900 jobs eliminated as building activity has dried up. After two strong months of gains late in 2008, employment weakened in forestry, fishing & mining (-5.9%).

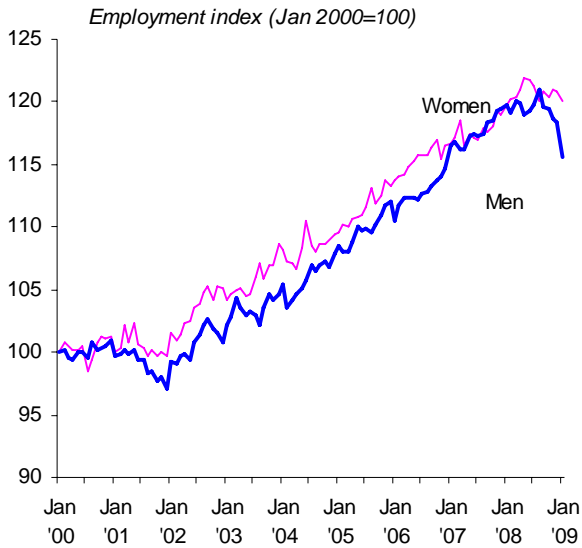
Employment in the service sector was 0.1% lower than in the previous month. The number of jobs grew in several service-based industries, most significantly in professional, scientific & technical (+4.6%), health care (+2.2%) and finance, insurance & real estate (+1.5%). However, these gains were offset by a drop in employment in other industries such as transportation & warehousing (-4.3%) and trade (-1.9%).

Men disproportionately affected by recent round of job losses

While men (male workers aged 15 years and older) represent a little more than half of employed British Columbians, more than four-fifths (81%) of all job losses occurring in January were experienced by men resulting in a 1.2 percentage point jump in male unemployment (to 6.9%). Looking back, male employment in BC has been shrinking steadily since September 2008, resulting in the elimination of 55,200 jobs previously held by men. With nearly 90% of the jobs in manufacturing and approximately 75% of positions in construction historically held by

men, it is not surprising that heavy job losses in these industries would affect them more adversely than it would affect women.

Job cuts in the goods sector has had a greater impact on employment for men than women



BC Stats

However, since males hold nearly six out of ten (58%) full-time jobs in the province, positions that typically have higher wages and benefits than their part-time counterparts, this dramatic decline in the number of workers with full-time employment could put considerable pressure on household income levels, at least in the short-run.

Expanding labour force results in higher unemployment in many of BC's regions

Nowhere in the province were job losses felt more keenly than in Cariboo where employment plummeted (-7.2%, 3-month moving average). Kootenay (-1.0%) and Mainland/Southwest (-1.6%) also saw employment opportunities shrink.

However, many regions saw gains in the number of jobs offered, but had these increases overshadowed by a rising number of people looking for work. In Northeast, employment rose 8.5%, but an 11.0% increase in the size of the region's labour force pushed unemployment 1.0 percentage points higher to 4.6%. While there were 4.0% more jobs in Vancouver Island/Coast, the number of job-seekers was up by 4.7% resulting in a higher jobless rate (5.1%). Similar scenarios unfolded in Thompson/Okanagan where unemployment rose to 7.0% and North Coast/Nechako where the jobless rate jumped to 9.3%.

In BC's two largest cities employment in both Vancouver (-1.6%) and Victoria (-0.7%) was down.

The Nation

Employment fell 0.8% in January, pushing Canada's jobless rate to 7.2%. This was the largest month-over-month percentage drop in employment since the 0.7% decline recorded in mid-1982. While BC lost the largest percentage of jobs (-1.5%) it was not alone in experiencing job losses as employment fell sharply in both Ontario (-1.1%) and Quebec (-0.7%).

| Selected Statistics | Jan-09 | Dec-08 | Jan-08 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|
| BC Unemployment Rate (%) | 6.1 | 5.3 | 4.1 |
| Canadian Unemployment Rate (%) | 7.2 | 6.6 | 5.8 |
| BC Employment ('000) | 2,268 | 2,303 | 2,308 |
| BC Labour Force Participation Rate (%) | 65.7 | 66.2 | 66.7 |
| Jan % change in employment relative to: | - | -1.5 | -1.7 |
| Jan % change in labour force relative to: | - | -0.7 | 0.4 |